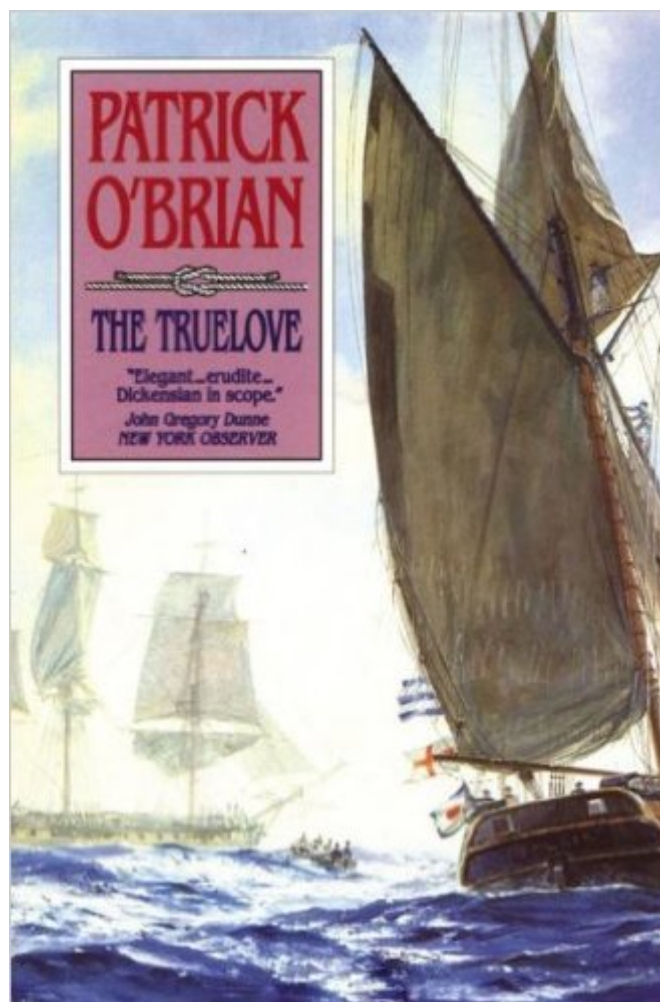


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The Truelove (Aubrey-Maturin)



Synopsis

In this novel in the popular series, a British whaling vessel has been captured in the Sandwich Islands, and Captain Aubrey is dispatched with the *Surprise* to restore order. But stowed away is an escaped female convict. Only Stephen Maturin can fathom her secrets and a clue to identifying a highly placed French spy in London.

Book Information

Series: Aubrey-Maturin (Book 15)

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (87 customer reviews)

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[Authors, A-Z > \(O \) > O'Brian, Patrick](#) #3148 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Some critics have referred to the Aubrey/Maturin books as one long novel united not only by their historical setting but also by the central plot element of the Aubrey/Maturin friendship. Having read these fine books over a period of several years, I decided to evaluate their cumulative integrity by reading them consecutively in order of publication over a period of a few weeks. This turned out to be a rewarding enterprise. For readers unfamiliar with these books, they describe the experiences of a Royal Navy officer and his close friend and traveling companion, a naval surgeon. The experiences cover a broad swath of the Napoleonic Wars and virtually the whole globe. Rereading all the books confirmed that O'Brian is a superb writer and that his ability to evoke the past is outstanding. O'Brian has numerous gifts as a writer. He is the master of the long, careful description, and the short, telling episode. His ability to construct ingenious but creditable plots is first-rate, probably because he based much of the action of his books on actual events. For example, some of the episodes of Jack Aubrey's career are based on the life of the famous frigate captain, Lord Cochrane. O'Brian excels also in his depiction of characters. His ability to develop

psychologically credible characters through a combination of dialogue, comments by other characters, and description is tremendous. O'Brien's interest in psychology went well beyond normal character development, some books contain excellent case studies of anxiety, depression, and mania. Reading O'Brien gives vivid view of the early 19th century. The historian Bernard Bailyn, writing of colonial America, stated once that the 18th century world was not only pre-industrial but also pre-humanitarian (paraphrase).

It was with some trepidation that I started this book because of what other reviewers said but I found it thoroughly enjoyable and moving as events subtly and inexorably moved to the blow up where officers are reprimanded and Surprises are flogged; where the innocent and the guilty worked till they near died under a right Tartar of a Captain who cowed even Killick until we reach this sentence: "When they were assembled in their usual unseemly heap their Captain surveyed them with a benevolence they had not seen this many a weary day and night..." and I and the Surprises breathed a collective sigh of relief. And then they dashed off into battle as the team they always were. Dull and actionless? Hardly.SPOILERS: Clarissa Oakes did not throw a baby down a well. Stephen offered her his protection and she offered up this hypothetical situation to test the genuineness of his offer. He already knew what her crime was and states it at one point in a letter to Blaine.At the start of the novel, it was obvious Jack had contracted hepatitis, an acute, self-limiting illness whose chief symptom is profound exhaustion which Stephen treated by purging and bleeding and admonishing him not to sleep so much as he'll only grow fatter. That he survived this regimen while commanding his ship is a testimony to his fortitude for even a saint would have grown liverish; I believe Jack may be excused for being grumpy and not his usual sanguine self.Also, women, in Jack's limited experience, were those delightful creatures one dallied with on shore. No one as damaged and poisonous as Clarissa has ever crossed his path, much less dropped into his little wooden world.

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